

Tawas Bay Players Newsletter

April/ May 2012



***Over the River and Through the Woods* by Deb DeBois**

The January show *Over The River and Through the Woods* had a wonderful run this winter with the audiences laughing and crying along with the comedy/drama. I would like to thank the talented cast of Ray Skiver, Sandy Schorfhaar, Alan Dalton, Franco Cimmino, Nancy Wigin and Tina Dalton as well as the hardworking crew led by Producers Phyllis Spencer and Mary Kiernan. The play seemed to go over well with the winter audiences and was talked about in the community. I often heard how much they liked the show and how impressed, as always, they are with the quality of talent in the Tawas Bay Players.

A few final, funny memories from me as the Director: that marvelous & funny family trivial pursuit game scene of the play, Alan learning how to play the mandolin, watching the new actors learn to move around & talk onstage comfortably for the first time, Nan and Franco turning circles to find how to always be seen by the audience and trying not to lose their voices projecting to the back of the theater, hearing Ray burst into "Yes sir, that's my baby!" every night and Tina's face as she looked at him, and finally Ray and Sandy's dance together to the same song. This cast never went hungry. Every time Sandy, as Aida, entered from the kitchen, which was often, she came with food for them to eat. This included the weeks of rehearsal too. We always had good snacks to munch on at the dining room scene on the set. But best of all, as with all casts and crews, was the meeting and generating new relationships, learning more about old friends, and laughing at all our past theater moments.

Teen Production by Suzan Witt

As a director, I find it exhilarating to look at the evolution of a production. It starts with a paperback script and transitions into this incredible display of life interpreted by those involved. We should be very proud of the teens that performed in our show. Not only are they intelligent, creative, and eager to learn but they are also fun, witty and willing to give back to the community. My objectives for this production were to enhance the kids acting abilities, encourage team work and creativity and have fun while producing a quality end product.

Each actor and actress performed two different roles throughout the production which was a true testament of their acting abilities. We worked together to create fun and interesting characters. Since this year's production was not a musical and many of our performers are musically gifted, we decided to add a little music and a little percussion. We had a wonderful production team. Everyone is crucial to the success of a production and I mean everyone!

The subject matter was close to home; teens deal with peer pressure and bullying every day. We took time to discuss how these issues can impact people's lives. It is not so important to me to put a popular title on the stage as it is to create a quality production that makes the audience think, laugh or cry. It is impossible to make everyone happy but if you touch one life, you make a difference.

What an amazing group of teens! They made a difference and I know they will continue to do so. Many thanks to a great cast – Marissa Shillair, Cassidy Thurmond, Morgan Anthony, Savannah Bettega, Donna Georgeieff, Kelli Philpot, Rachelle Tetley, Kaylie Mooney, Taylor Knapp, Taylor Hemphill, Matt Archambault, Tara Crawford, Markus Lopez, Tyrell Austin, Gabby Morris, Travis Pearce and Alaina Dehner.

Theater Superstitions

You may all have heard of the theater superstition of never saying the name of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, calling it instead 'the Scottish Play'. But did you know that some actors believe: do not whistle in the dressing room, if an actress drops a comb she must dance over it or she will lose her job, never put shoes on a table or if you speak the last line of a play during rehearsals it means the play will flop. It's a good thing TBP members aren't a superstitious lot.



***The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* by June Hudgins**

Hello everyone. I just want to let you know that our spring musical *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* is coming along nicely. We have a great cast. All is going well so far and we are all having fun at rehearsals. Of course with most of the cast playing the part of adolescents how can we miss? The cast of adults consists of Mendy Shmina as Rona Lisa Peretti, the hostess and a former champion, Alan Dalton as Douglas Panch, vice principal and the word pronouncer and John Morris as Mitch Mahoney, the comfort counselor. The spellers are played by Jeff Chadwick as Chip Tolentino, Suzan

Witt as Logainne Schwartzandgrubenierre, Pam Katona as Leaf Coneybear, Alicia Sgambelluri as Marcy Park, Chris Mundy as William Barfee and Pam Frank as Olive Ostrovsky. In addition to great actors and singers, we have a pit full of outstanding musicians headed up by the very talented Diane Meyer. We are pleased to have Susan Rook on keyboard, Joann Noffsinger on flute, Rich Cranston on percussion and Diane playing synthesizer, sax and xylophone. Many thanks as well to producer Vickie Szatkowski and vocal coach Pam Katona.

Don't forget all members are invited to attend our Dress Rehearsal on May 9th at 7pm so please come out and support them. If you cannot come to the dress rehearsal please come to one of our regular shows, May 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19 and 20. **Editor's note: Don't miss this bunch of misfit adolescents as they compete in their county Spelling Bee. We are having way too much fun acting like kids, some nights much to June's dismay.**

Announcing the First Annual TBP Park & Sell by Janie Mundy & Diane Ray

It will be held, rain or shine, Saturday, May 26, 2012 from 9:00 am till 3:00 pm in the parking lot of the Playhouse. This is a fun and easy way for TBP members to get rid of unwanted or unneeded items without the effort of holding your own garage sale. Just buy a space for \$5, sell your stuff from your car and all the money made is yours. Spaces will be offered to the general public as well so reserve yours soon. We encourage you to bring something to display your items, such as a card table and also a chair to sit in. Payment can be made the morning of the sale and no refunds will be given once the sale begins.



We have a couple additional ways to make money for TBP. We will have a table of items and offer baked goods and water for sale. We would appreciate donations of gently used items (no clothing please) to be sold from the TBP table as well as baked goods of all types. You can drop off your donations Friday, May 25th from 5 pm – 7 pm or Saturday morning before the sale. Of course we need volunteers to help with set up, pricing, selling and clean up. All money raised will be used to purchase tools for the Playhouse. Please call Janie at 362-9199 or Diane at 305-6767 to reserve your space, volunteer or if you have questions. Unsold member donations will be sent to St. Vincent de Paul. Plan to come and join the fun!

Auditions set for Summer Production of *Let's Play "Crossroads"*! By Debra DeBois

Tryout dates are set for the World Premier of Michal Jacot's latest play, *Let's Play "Crossroads"*! They will be held Tuesday, May 15 and Wednesday, May 16 at 6:30 at the Playhouse. I know it's the interim week of the Spring show, but with Memorial Weekend coming up right after, we are holding it in between weekends to be able to have enough rehearsal time.

The play revolves around the TV game show, *Crossroads*, a question and answer format style of game show similar to *Jeopardy*. When the champion for the day suddenly dies of a heart attack and the other two contestants end up with zero cash, the show's Producers make the decision to start over with three brand new contestants. That's where the fun begins. The three new contestants discover a way to never lose, keep playing the game forever and still play by the rules. This of course, completely frustrates the staff of the game show. The rest, as they say, is pure fun. If you love to watch game shows you'll love this original show written by our own Michal Jacot.

We need a cast of 5-6 men and 5-6 women with some parts that can be male or female. AND the tech crews get to do live crossovers (with no lines, so don't worry, techies) on stage as the tech crew of the TV Studio. Sounds like a lot of fun for all. Please come to tryouts. Deb DeBois is Director, with June Groff as Producer and Tina Dalton acting as Assistant Director. Production dates for this show are July 13-15 and 26-29.

Youth Production Coming This Summer!

This summer Tawas Bay Players are proud to present an original musical by our own Diane Meyer. *The Honey Comb* is a story set in the Old West with bugs as the heroes and villains, sort of *Gunsmoke* with insects. Auditions will be held June 18th and 19th at 6:00 pm and are open to youth in 3rd through 8th grades. We need 20-25 young people total, 7-10 in main roles and the rest as chorus. The show will be directed by Suzan Witt and Diane with Pam Katona as the musical director and vocal coach. Suzan is still in need of a producer; please let her know if you are interested. Even though the auditions will be held in June, rehearsals won't begin until after the July 4th holiday with 3 or 4 rehearsals each week. The show will be presented just one weekend, August 10, 11 and 12.

Proposed 2012 -2013 Schedule

The Board has proposed the following shows. This schedule is only tentative until the contracts have been signed. The fall show, *Quilters* however is definite.

Quilters directed by Carol Kushion and Chris Mundy – Oct 12-14, 18-21

It's a Wonderful Life, the Radio Show directed by Tara Western & Vince Weiler – Nov 30, Dec 1 & 2

Tons of Money directed by Sharon Langley & June Hudgins – Jan 18-20, 24-27

Seussical the Musical (Teen Show) directed by Alicia Sgambelluri & Lisa Denney – Mar 15-17, 21-24.

The Music Man directed by Dennis Szatkowski Sr – May 10-12, 16-19

Drinking Habits directed by Debra Debois – July 12-14, 18-21

Sleeping Beauty directed by June Hudgins and Pat Casey – Oct 11-13, 17-20

The Board is very willing to add a summer Youth show. If anyone is interested in submitting one let one of the board members know.

TBP Board News

Annual Membership Dinner/Meeting

Last year for a variety of reasons we were unable to schedule a dinner to precede our annual meeting. We held the meeting in August since it is required in our bylaws and Board elections had to take place. After some discussion, it was decided that we would change the format of the dinner. We will hold a picnic at Dewey Durant Park in East Tawas sometime during the summer and have a separate business meeting at a later date in the theater.

So far the Board has agreed to provide hamburgers, hot dogs, buns, condiments, chips and ice. Each member/member family will be asked to bring a dish to pass, their own table service and whatever they would like to drink. Watch for further information as plans are finalized.

Orchestra Pit/Stage Addition

The engineering firm is completing the drawings. There were some difficulties related to the foundation and some details that needed clarification. We are hoping to have everything ironed out soon so we can request bids and begin the project.

Cleaning Bees

Very much like our own homes, the theater occasionally requires a deep cleaning. June Hudgins is great at keeping things straightened and there is a crew for each show that makes it presentable. But we have hit upon an idea to provide some additional cleaning. We are proposing that 4 times a year we have a cleaning bee. When we have the details set you can expect a call or perhaps an email from one of our board members asking for your help. If each member can spare a few hours we can put a real shine on our Playhouse. With the number of members we have, you should only be asked to help once every couple of years. We hope that everyone will help with this project.

2012 Raffle

Only a month to go before this year's raffle kicks off Memorial Day weekend. Last year's prizes were so popular that we are repeating them this year: **First prize**, a D-130 John Deere Lawn Tractor, **Second prize**, an LG 50" Flat Screen TV and LG Blu-Ray Surround Sound Home Theater System, **Third prize**, a 42,000BTU Weber Gas Grill, and **Fourth prize**, \$100 and two 2012-2013 Season Tickets.

Raffle chair Deb DeBois reports that the raffles have raised \$102,478 since they began and we made \$8,486 profit last year. Looking at the gross sales for last year, \$2,990 was raised by members and \$9,074 was due to tickets sold at events. We also had 368 lost tickets and 1,279 unsold tickets last year. As you can see from the dollar amounts, the raffle is a large contributor to our total income. Just think how much more we could make if members sold even more tickets.

TBP Contact Information

Keith Frank – President	362-8492	k.frank@charter.net
June Hudgins – Vice President/House Manager	362-8423	jhudgins8423@charter.net
Vickie Szatkowski – Secretary	362-6419	densden2@yahoo.com
Pat Casey – Treasurer/Singers	362-6012	pcasey@chartermi.net
Debra DeBois – Corresponding Secretary	362-6800	debois@charter.net
Chris Mundy	362-9199	daddoo10@hotmail.com
Penny Zacharias	739-1903	pzac7@yahoo.com
Judy Quarters	362-8463	judykg@hotmail.com
Tim Haskin	362-4978	tawastim@yahoo.com
Pam Frank – Newsletter Editor	362-8492	p.frank@charter.net

A Cautionary Tale by Tara Western

Once upon a time a very gifted Community Theater person went to visit another theater group's rehearsal in a state a long way from here. He was totally ignored by the people in the theater. He sat and watched rehearsal for a long time and nobody came to talk to him.

Later, when one of the cast members found out who he was, they greeted him with open arms. They came to find out that he had fifty years of theater experience and is a talented director, of which they are in dire need. Now this tale could end two different ways. The Gifted One could say, "Thanks, but no thanks" or he could forgive them for their momentary neglect. Well, he is now thinking about directing for them and even teaching a Master class in Community Theater directing using Jim Carver's bible, *Carver's Manual on Directing Community Theater*.

Moral: Don't ignore visitors. Greet them, talk to them, find out who they are, why they are there and RECRUIT them. Who knows who or what talent we might be overlooking. Do we need a designated "greeter"? Or maybe everybody should just say hi! As you may have guessed the "gifted Community Theater person" was our own Vincent Weiler and this story took place in Concord, NC where he and Bev recently bought a condo.

A Tribute to One of Our Finest Talents by Dennis Szatkowski

I write this letter today from the perspective of one man, myself, but I am sure that once you read what I have to say that anyone and everyone who reads this will share the same view as I. As I decided to write this, I initially had planned to just write a long overdue letter of praise regarding one of our extremely talented and valuable members but after thinking more about it, this letter will have two purposes which I will cover henceforth. Please allow me to share how this overwhelming need to write this letter came to be.

This past weekend Vickie came home and had a copy of TBP's production of "Grease" in her hand. In casual conversation, I asked her what she was doing with the DVD. She explained to me that she had just gotten it and had been told that at the end of the production, during the segment of the "Willy Awards" presented by Michal Jacot (of course!) there were some clips of her dad, Lyle Groff Sr., from a time just a few years before he passed away. She told me that she wanted to watch that segment so she could see her dad and I looked forward to watching it too. Now, keep in mind, this production was presented in 1992, 20 years ago! After a routine night of cleaning up after dinner, pouring each of us a glass of ice tea and getting comfortably situated in our reclining chairs, I put the DVD in the player and hit the "play" button. At first, we watched the opening scenes of the musical with smiles and fond memories of a cast that was so much younger than what we are today. We also commented with fond memories on a few of the members present during that production and in that video that are no longer with us today: JoAnn Helms, Jim Carr, Lyle Groff Sr.

Well, we fast forwarded to the "Willy Awards" and as the camera panned the members present at the cast party, the big moment came and there sat Michal Jacot on a step in the entrance to a hallway. It was time..... and he stood up and immediately turned around and had something he had prearranged and stuck on the back of his pants that looked like dog poo..... and his opening "funny" addressed the "dog doody" he had sat in. Well, from there on he made countless "funnies" in reference to "Doody" which was a character in that production. Before I go on, let me suggest to anyone interested in getting a better picture of what I am referring to, that you actually watch this comedy routine which was actually Michal's presentation of the "Willy Awards" for this 1992 production of Grease. I guarantee you that you will bust a gut with laughter and if it doesn't make you laugh..... then you don't have a pulse!!

Let me try to get to my point. I have always known how talented Michal is. All of you know how talented Michal is. But have we really recognized just HOW talented he REALLY is? Or, have we sort of just taken it for granted because we have had the wonderful opportunity to watch his talent and be a friend or acquaintance over all the many years we've been blessed with his presence in our theatre group? As Vickie and I watched this one man comedy routine, which was actually a show, after a show, it occurred to me as if watching some top notch, national comedian for the first time, that this man has a natural talent equivalent to anyone..... anywhere!! Maybe it's because I'm older now. Maybe it's because after all the years with the Tawas Bay Players I fully know and appreciate what actually goes into a production. Watching Michal's skit on that video impressed me not only from his unsurpassable sense of humor and wit, not only from his expert timing and delivery of one liners and jokes that kept us laughing out loud for almost 45 minutes but from also from what it took him to prepare that monologue. In essence, he put together a professional 45-60 minute, "one man show" in a very little amount of time. The things he observed that actually occurred during the production of Grease and how he related them to practically every member of the cast and production crew was impressive enough. Adding to that though, he actually put all that together in a very short time during the production. That wasn't a one time performance; he has done this many times over the years. Okay.... So to get the full appreciation of what I'm trying to say here.... Watch the DVD if you want to have a great laugh. The quality of the picture isn't so hot but you can see enough and what you will hear is as good as any comedy routine, anywhere.

So, where am I going with all this?? I think we don't often take time enough to recognize and say good things to people, especially when they might be a shining star walking amongst us. Often times we don't express great things about people until it's too late. Our theatre group has been so very, very fortunate to have someone as talented as Michal Jacot among our ranks. Now, I'm not saying there aren't other great, talented people in our group that deserve special recognition, because I can think of many other great talents within our group as well. But in every theatre group, you always have a few that are learning and need improvement, a few that are mediocre performers, a few that are pretty darn good, and a few that are just downright blessed with talent! The upper echelon is where Michal fits in. We have been blessed from the earliest days of our group with a man who has talent that perhaps we might almost take for

granted because we “have him” in our midst. I always knew he was so incredibly talented but when I watched that video from 20 years ago, it just hit me in the head like some new revelation of just HOW talented he really is.

Michal is funny!!! He is downright hilarious with the stuff he comes up with! Michael is talented!!! He could be doing a routine in Vegas as far as I’m concerned. He is an accomplished playwright. His list of credits are growing and growing. Playwright, actor, comedian, story teller, children’s book writer, lecturer, play director, etc, etc, etc. I have had the distinct pleasure of being onstage with him over the years and have also sat in the audience watching him when I wasn’t in a show with him. I have watched him literally crack me up..... and in shows like “The Boys Next Door” and others, he has actually brought a huge lump to my throat and tears to my eye. Do you know how hard it is to maintain the character of a one armed, abusive and nasty father to be yelling and cursing out obscenities to your fellow actor when he is putting a huge lump in your throat while acting??? Talk about comedy and tragedy! Wow! LOL!

Okay.... So I have to cut this off somewhere.... Guess this is the spot. I would appreciate it very much if this was read and recognized at the next board meeting. I’d appreciate it if it went into the next newsletter. I’d like Michal to know how much this group appreciates all his contributions for his many years with the group. Yes, I know that he is a recipient of the “Founder’s Award”.....but this is just a little something “extra” that I think would be nice for him to know. It is an honor to be able to be on stage with someone as talented as Michal and our community theatre group is just plain blessed to have him as “ours”!

Thank you for reading this and next time you see Michal around, give him a big “atta boy”!!

Editor note: Thank you Dennis for saying something that should have been said a long time ago.



Happy Birthday



	April	May	June
March	1 Stephen Morris	2 Diane King	
4 Bob O'Meara	3 Jayme Nunn	5 Diane Brewer	4 Michal Jacot
7 Chaison Stuart	4 Amanda Grusecki	7 Gregory Jacot	6 Travis Pearce
16 John Henry	5 Jane Ruster	7 Bill Grusecki	8 Mary Kiernan
17 George Robson	10 Sherill Frank	7 Charles Stuart Jr.	10 Jodielynn Price
19 Frank Brewer	10 Sal Agnello	12 Ray Skiver	15 Cheryl Colvin
22 Maripat O'Malley	11 Margery MacMurray	13 Pam Frank	15 Rob Nordin
24 Ethan Buchanan	14 Sharon Bailey	13 Marie Girard	16 Lynn Phillips
27 Judy Merluzzi	19 Harry Johnson	17 Suzan Witt	16 Andy Marciniak
27 Jessica Smith	24 Jerry Wergedal	17 Warren Brewer	20 Christian Wygant
28 Geri Koepke	26 June Groff	20 Kaye Wergedal	21 Laurie Jacot
30 Brianna Dalton	27 Laura Zacharias	22 Erica Tatum	22 Pat Ruster
31 Chris Nunn	28 Barb Hunter	25 Mike Merluzzi	26 Kay Robson
		26 Sue Dowell	27 Craig Sayer
		26 Tom LeClair	27 Sheldon Skiver
		30 Andre DeWilde	30 Mary Ann Michalski
		30 Alan Kushion	

Theater Critics' Remarks

A critic, reviewing a revival of the musical *Godspell* at the Old Vic Theatre in London in 1981 said, “*Godspell* is back in London...for those who missed it the first time, this is your golden opportunity: you can miss it again”.

Of Peter O'Toole as Macbeth at the same theater in 1980, it was said, “His performance suggests that he is taking some kind of personal revenge on the play.”

Over the River and Through the Woods



Snow Angel



A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Fifth Period

